

May 22, 1995

LB 544, 564, 579, 583, 629

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Schmitt. While the Legislature is in session and capable of transacting business, I propose to sign and do hereby sign LB 544, LB 564, LB 579, LB 583 and LB 629. Senator Vrtiska, your light is next.

SENATOR VRTISKA: Madam President and members of the board (sic), I also rise in support of Colonel Pearson for this appointment to the Parole Board. I would like to ask Senator Chambers a question, if I might.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Yes.

SENATOR VRTISKA: Senator Chambers, do you know this individual?

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Not personally.

SENATOR VRTISKA: If you don't know him and know anything about him, you know, I...you're a person who doesn't believe in discrimination, it appears to me that this is a discriminatory action on your part just because he happens to be a member of the Patrol, to say that he's not fit to serve.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Senator Vrtiska, because of the nature of the Parole Board and the fact that we need a distribution of people from different backgrounds on this board, to have two members from law enforcement is totally inappropriate. If the second one were my brother, it would be inappropriate.

SENATOR VRTISKA: Well, I happen to disagree because I think a man's background and the type of person he is is more important than what his occupation prior to this appointment. I don't think that it really has that much to do with it. Obviously, somebody that's been involved in enforcement of the law understands how the process works and is better equipped to deal with the matter of parole for individuals who have been put in...incarcerated. So I...I think that your argument is weak insofar as the type of person. I look at the person, not what his past background is as to whether he can be effective or not. I don't know Mr. Pearson that well but I know that he is a person who appears to have the capability of serving fairly and I think that's what we should be looking at and certainly not discriminate against him simply because he happened to be a